



November 28, 2005

TO: SECRETARY DONALD H. RUMSFELD  
SECRETARY GALE NORTON  
SECRETARY CARLOS M. GUTIERREZ  
SECRETARY MIKE JOHANNES  
ADMINISTRATOR STEPHEN L. JOHNSON

FROM: JAMES L. CONNAUGHTON *JLC*  
Chairman, Council on Environmental Quality

LINDA M. SPRINGER *LS*  
Director, Office of Personnel Management

SUBJECT: IMPLEMENTING EXECUTIVE ORDER 13352 THROUGH A  
COMPETENCY BASED APPROACH TO COLLABORATION AND  
PARTNERING

The purpose of this Memorandum is to ensure that the Departments of the Interior, Agriculture, Commerce, Defense and the Environmental Protection Agency take into account, to the fullest extent possible, the principles of Cooperative Conservation in the hiring, training and rewarding of Federal employees consistent with agency mission requirements and individual employee duties.

Through Executive Order #13352<sup>1</sup> (Order) "*Facilitation of Cooperative Conservation*" President George W. Bush directed the agencies named to: "implement laws relating to the environment and natural resources in a manner that promotes cooperative conservation, with an emphasis on appropriate inclusion of local participation in Federal decision making, in accordance with their respective agency missions, policies and regulations."<sup>2</sup>

The Order directed the Chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) to convene a White House Conference on Cooperative Conservation (conference) to "facilitate the

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<sup>1</sup> President George W. Bush, "Facilitation of Cooperative Conservation," Executive Order 13352. (August 28, 2004) Federal Register /Vol. 69, No. 167 / Monday, August 30, 2004/ Presidential Documents

<sup>2</sup> The Order reaffirms the direction for Federal decision making to be conducted in cooperation with tribal, state and local governments, and to provide opportunities for local inclusion provided in Executive Order 11514 (March 5, 1970 as amended by E.O. 11991 of May 24, 1977) and the National Environmental Policy Act 42 U.S.C. § 4321 et.seq..

exchange of information and advice relating to (i) cooperative conservation and (ii) means for achievement of the purpose of this Order;”<sup>3</sup>

The conference was held in St. Louis Missouri between August 29<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> 2005. Based on a recurring theme heard throughout the conference, all five agencies named in the Order have agreed, through their respective Chief Human Capital Officers, to support a competency-based approach<sup>4</sup> to developing within their organizations the collaboration and partnering skills necessary to ensure the appropriate inclusion of local partnerships in achieving conservation objectives where consistent with mission and statute.

We applaud you for supporting this commitment by your agencies to enhance and accelerate the ability of your employees to engage more effectively and openly with others. We strongly encourage you to adopt these approaches in a timely manner and in a way that is consistent with the human resources improvements you are implementing in accordance with the President’s Management Agenda.

We understand that each of the agencies named in the Order has distinct human resources policies and will have individualized strategies for implementing this guidance memorandum. Therefore, to measure our progress in achieving results, each agency named in the Order shall provide to CEQ and OPM a memorandum outlining the actions it will take to develop the knowledge skills, abilities and behaviors necessary to meet the objectives set forth in the Order.<sup>5</sup>

The memorandum reporting your progress shall be submitted by March 31, 2006 and your progress in meeting the objectives outlined shall also be included in your department or agency’s annual report to CEQ on actions taken to implement the Order.<sup>6</sup>

If you have any questions concerning this memorandum, please contact Mitchell J. Butler, Council on Environmental Quality, 202-456-9726.

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<sup>3</sup> Executive Order 13352 Section 4 (a)

<sup>4</sup> For purposes of this memorandum, “competency” is defined as: The group of knowledge, skills, abilities and behaviors necessary to achieve conservation goals through collaborative processes.

<sup>5</sup> For Example, agencies may choose to adopt one or more of the following approaches:

- a. Undertake efforts to ensure that selection criteria for appropriate positions include attributes such as:
  - A demonstrated commitment to, and experience in, partnership building.
  - A commitment to working collaboratively in the completion of conservation projects.
- b. Identification of the competencies necessary for effective collaboration in conservation projects and development and/or modification of employee training programs to advance the attributes identified.
- c. Incorporation of these competencies into performance measures for agency personnel responsible for program and project planning, development and implementation.
- d. Undertake consultations with academic institutions from which the agency hires about the need to include cooperative conservation competencies in curriculum and practical training.

<sup>6</sup> Annual reporting requirement. Executive Order 13352 3(b)